

>> MENESES: So the first issue I found in creating trust was talk with the clients not at them. That's a lot of feedback I get from the people that I work with. "Larry, I like talking with you because you talk with us not at us." And, certainly, I think that that's very important to establish and create that relationship in which you can create change with. Nobody likes to be lectured. They like to be talked with and collaborated with, and so I found that and being client-centered were two effective ways to start developing that trust. So by client-centered, think about what can I do to make this client successful? What do they need? Look at it from their point of view. What do they want to talk about? What are their goals, and listening to that and trying to look at things from their eyes is also principle to creating this foundation that change can occur.

We all have to create individual service plans. I make it a point in mine to use pronouns. Mary has a car and three children, as opposed to client has a car. You know, try to use long sentences. In our work, working with the TANF people, you really have to know the rules and be knowledgeable. In the early morning workshop we talked about try to keep people in participation requirements, how to work the rules. Well one thing that I learned very early on is learn how to work the rules in the client's favor.

Another piece of feedback that I get with the people I work with is, "Larry, we like working with you because you keep it very real." I talk about what are the consequences of not fulfilling what's outlined in the employability plan, and in that we explore all options. The person who comes to you who you says that they want to be a CNA but has a felony drug conviction, now that may not work, but certainly they may be able to work in some type of office administrative job. Here's a real key. Take a pause to acknowledge that you're intruding in their life, that you're asking these questions. I mean, you know, nobody wants to be having to bear all to a relative stranger, so I often say, "Hey, I'm sorry, but I have to ask you these questions."

Another key issue is, is this the right time? I once worked with someone who was living in a shelter and just had a baby, had a two-month-old baby, wanted to go to CNA classes in the winter with an unreliable car. It wasn't the right time. We waited until March. She completed the program on time, and she's working in one of our local hospitals. Be sure to ask questions but be sure to give the opportunity to let the person you're working with ask questions, and make sure you answer them all.

Once you've established all of this and gone through this entire process, committed the paper, that's what the individualized service plan is about, and make sure it's their plan and they understand that they're agreeing to doing all the things you have articulated over the last hour-and-a-half.

Coordinate and support, this is probably the hard part. So many of the students that I worked with had problems with childcare, and DSS wasn't helping me. I was able to create relationships with the childcare providers, and based on my guarantee that they would be paid, they provided childcare. Now one of the biggest concerns that were mentioned to me is, "You know, is this going to close my case? How much can I earn before my case closes?" So you really have to know what the rules are on case close and let them know at what have point and how much

money they can have, how much more resources they can have in their household. And one of the biggest tools we can use to motivate clients is to talk about the earned income tax credit, which a \$3,000, \$4,000, \$5,000 lump sum payment at the end of the tax year can help them get that new car to get them up to the next level.

Celebrate success. I love it when we have to come up with our success stories, and I can go through the case files and really try to find somebody who has been extraordinary in their achievements over the last several months that we've worked at. It's so important.

And here's the downside of it. Sometimes things don't work out. You know, that's reality. You know, nobody bats a thousand in this field. So what do you do when that happens? I think one of the presenters this morning said it really well, "Use failure as a teaching moment." So what do you do? You rebuild, you restart, you find out what were the reasons for the failure, what can you do to eliminate the barrier that created that barrier, and how do you push through so that you can be successful next time.

So if there's anything I can do, especially about working around the TANF rules, please take down my phone number, send me an e-mail. I'm very responsive. And there are a lot of tricks that you can use. So thank you very much, and I think you guys are finished for today.